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NON-OVERT CAUSAL LINKS IN MODERN RUSSIAN: THE IMPACT OF DISCOURSE EXPECTATIONS

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1. Introduction.

Non-overt causal links are ubiquitous in natural language: they occur even in those genres that seemingly require maximal explicitness, such as legal, administrative or scientific texts, not to mention spontaneous speech, advertising, newspaper articles, literary fiction, etc. Whereas they most often play a minor role in narrative or descriptive genres, their significance for the understanding of argumentative discourse, where they range from political debates or legal controversies to Internet forums and everyday conversation, is beyond any doubt, regardless of the poly-, dia- or monologic character of the discourse under scrutiny. Therefore, a procedure that will allow to detect and predict such implicit causal links in a given chunk of discourse is of utmost importance. However, even in the age of corpus linguistics, the developing of such a procedure is not an easy task: unlike single or multiword expressions, empty slots, such as zeroes ellipses or other missing elements, do not lend themselves easily to automatic retrieval. To my knowledge, there are no such devices available to date.

This holds in particular for argument mining, cf.: «Argumentation mining is a relatively new challenge in corpus-based discourse analysis that involves automatically identifying argumentative structures within a document, e.g., the premises, conclusion, and argumentation scheme of each argument, as well as argument-subargument and argument-counterargument relationships between pairs of arguments in the document. To date, researchers have investigated methods for argumentation mining of legal documents (Mochales and Moens 2011; Bach et al. 2013; Ashley and Walker 2013; Wyner et al. 2010), on-line debates (Cabrio and Villata 2012), product reviews (Villalba and Saint-Dizier 2012; Wyner et al. 2012), user comments on proposed regulations (Park and Cardie 2014), newspaper articles and court cases (Feng and Hirst 2011)¹». This citation opens very promising perspectives for the automatic search of causal links – but, as we learn from the continuation, only with overt connectives, such as *because*, *as* and the like!

Thus, we are forced to resort to more traditional methods. One way out is offered by top-down deductive reasoning: we can first discuss what types of utterances, speech acts etc. are in principle accessible to explanations, motivations and argumentations, no matter whether these are lexically marked or realised non-overtly. Next, we may go one step further by asking which elements in a given string trigger the expectation of such arguments or explanations in the subsequent or preceding text. The need for an explanation can be tested experimentally by the elimination of existing causal links in the contexts under examination in order to verify the acceptability of the results. This two-stage procedure from mere possibility to (im)probability was adopted in the pilot study Weiss 1982. When proceeding in

¹ <http://www.cs.cornell.edu/home/cardie/naacl-2nd-arg-mining/>. The references cited in this quotation have not been included in the bibliography of the present study since they are irrelevant for our purpose, see below.

this way, one should however bear in mind that non-overt and overt causality may be open to different textual solutions. Therefore, said study also explored the interchangeability of these two alternatives.

Today, the rise of corpus linguistics enables us to switch to bottom-up, data-driven research: once a preliminary list of possible lexical triggers – for example negation, evidentials, inferential modals, etc. — is established, we can systematically check their contexts in available on-line resources (for instance the Russian National Corpus, RNC for short) in search of preceding or following non-overt causal links. In the ideal case, this will not only allow to determine the absolute and relative frequency of such links, but also to filter out especially preferred or dispreferred elements in the contexts surrounding the given trigger. It goes without saying that this will be a very time-consuming task, as in the RNC such triggers are attested by tens of thousands hits, others like negation even by millions of examples. Therefore, the present article still preserves the character of a pilot study that focuses more on methodological questions and deductive argumentation. It is based on heterogeneous data: the examples stem from spontaneous spoken Russian as well as from current political discourse (mostly parliamentary debates) and literary fiction, in few cases also from the RNC. Some of the examples are quoted from the pertinent grammatical literature. If no source is specified, the example is my own.

The structure of the article is the following. Section 2 is devoted to the definition of the basic concept of ‘non-overtness’ and to its distinction from the neighbouring terms ‘implicit’, ‘zero’ or ‘asyndetic’. Moreover, the range of meanings of non-overt links will be given a first look. The section closes with a brief discussion of non-lexical (prosodic and punctuational) markers of non-overt links. Section 3 analyses the speech act level: which types and subtypes of SA invite explanations, which ones don’t? Besides this, the dichotomy of deductive and reductive argumentation will be illustrated. Section 4 focuses on the degree of obligatoriness of non-overt linking compared with the overt strategy: which types of contexts require and which others prevent non-overt causal links? Section 5 explores the impact of word order: to what extent should we account for arguments or causes preceding conclusions or effects? This also involves the converse relation of causality, i.e. consecutive links. This section will offer an important clue how not to treat non-overt links in the syntactic representation. Finally, section 6 tackles the problem of discourse expectations by testing selected possible triggers for subsequent explanations.

2. Implicit vs. non-overt connection.

Before tackling our main subject, the format of causal links has to be specified. In the present study, such links will only be analysed if their conjuncts are clauses, sentences or sequences of sentences. In other words, prepositional links realised for instance with *because of*, *due to* etc. are beyond its scope, and the same holds for adjectival or participial modifiers and appositions that allow an implicit causal reading.

In the abundant literature on causal links, relatively few attention has been given to the manifold non-overt realisations of causality on the interclausal level². In what follows, I will therefore sketch out a preliminary distinction of what may be covered by the umbrella term ‘implicit clausal link’ and then specify the objective of this paper.

To begin with, in European languages we often find conjunctions that explicitly mark another semantic relation but may be said to also convey a contextually-bound causal reading. This holds in particular for temporal links, cf.

1a) Kogda â vklûčil svet, žena prosnulas’.

When I lit on the light, my wife awoke.

The folk logical conclusion here involved is obviously ‘post hoc, ergo praeter hoc’. The same meaning may also be rendered by the coordination with *and*:

1b) Â vklûčil svet, i žena prosnulas’.

I lit on the light, and my wife awoke.

This example even has a doubly implicit (temporal and causal) meaning since its clausal order iconically reflects the chronological order of events³. The same strategy may be found in the biblical quotation «Dixitque Deus: fiat lux, *et* facta est lux».

Another potential source of implicit causal readings are relative clauses. The following series of examples illustrates this point:

2) Studenty, kotorye uvlekaûtsâ lingvistikoj, nikogda ne skučaût na zanâtiâx.

Students who are fascinated by linguistics are never bored during class.

In the next case, the relative pronoun refers to a propositional antecedent which provides the reason of the event described in the relative clause. Thus, the pronoun occupies the causal valency of the governing verb *radovat’sâ* (be glad):

3) Načal’nik dolgo otsutstvoval, čemu radovalis’ vse.

The boss was absent for a long time, [a fact] which made all happy.

Even the following famous quotation from Vysockij may be said to provide an indirect motivation of a conventionalised implicit threat:

4) A tot, kto ran’she s neû byl, togo â povstrečaû.

² For Russian, the two monographs Širâev 1986 and Breuer 2002 cover the whole range of asyndetic links and assign only an insignificant part to the discussion of implicit causality.

³ As may be seen, I do not posit any polysemy of *and* to distinguish its sequential from the simultaneous reading. This seems to be all the more preferable as we would also have to distinguish a third meaning, viz. *and* combining two perspectives on the same event (cf. «He turned the switch *and* lit on the light»).

But the guy who used to be her friend before, him I will meet again!

As examples 2 and 4 show, the implicit causal reading obtains also in restrictive relative clauses⁴. A rather tricky case is illustrated in the following example, where a seeming purpose clause functions as a causal clause:

5) I šitaû, što deputat-robot segodnâ očen' udoben vlasti: *čtoby* on voobše sidel, molčal i nažimal knopki. (T. Pletněva, KP, State Duma 2.6.2008).

And I think that nowadays a robot deputy is very convenient for the government: it should [lit. *in order to*] just sit here, be silent and press [voting] buttons.

Here, the conjunction *čtoby* realises a valency slot of the adjective *udoben*, cf. *udoben čem* (convenient because of what/ in what respect).

To make a long story short: all these contextually bound uses of connectors with non-causal overt meanings do not belong to my topic and will not be discussed in this article. Instead, I will focus on what commonly is referred to as **zero** linking. However, I will avoid this term for two reasons: (i) it is underspecified in that it covers either real zero signs or elliptical uses, or else omissions of a third kind⁵, and (ii): in section 5 it will be argued that numerous cases are structurally ambiguous in that they allow for different locations of the zero symbol within the same sentence, yielding either a causal or consecutive interpretation. For these reasons it seems preferable to use the neutral term **non-overt** causal link. For the sake of transparency, such non-overt links will however be marked with the sign 'ø'. It may be added that the traditional term '**asyndetic** link' actually covers the same range of phenomena; yet, it is often associated with coordinative listing, i.e. the omission of *and*, as is shown by most definitions available on the Internet⁶. As for the Russian term *bessôûznyj* (conjunctionless) used in Širâev 1986 and in AG 1982, it is too narrow since it does not exclude adverbs and other connectives.

As is pointed out in the pertinent literature (in particular Širâev 1986 and Breuer 2002), the exact **interpretation** of a given non-overt link is often debatable: for instance, besides a causal reading it may also invite a temporal or conditional reading. This distinguishes it from overt causal connectives. In Russian grammatical tradition, such cases are covered by the term «non-differenciated meaning», which will be discussed in section 5. Moreover, some Russian causal conjunctions have specific meanings which cannot accurately be rendered asyndetically, cf. *raz*, *ottogo čto* or *tem bolee čto* (for illustrations see below). We may thus conclude that real synonymy of a non-overt link with its overt counterpart(s) is rarely attested. In the present study, all instances of non-overt links allow only for a causal interpretation except those discussed in section 5.

⁴ As for non-restrictive clauses (cf. (3)), the possibility of their implicit causal interpretation results already from their paraphrasability with *and*.

⁵ For details, see Breuer 2002, Wilhelm 1998 and Weiss 2013.

⁶ For a similar preference in the German grammatical tradition, see Breuer 2002: 51-53.

A final remark concerns the non-lexical marking of non-overt causal links. **Syntax** is involved if word order turns out to be distinctive. This is however by no means self-evident, as will be shown in section 5: causal clauses or sentences are not always postposed, but occur in preposition and in colloquial Russian even in interposition. Thus, they behave much in the same way as overt hypotactical causal conjunctions⁷. That is not to say that the order of the conjuncts may always be reversed: for example, if the explanation answers a preceding *why*-question, word order cannot be changed.

On the other hand, **prosody** and – as its typographic equivalent – **punctuation** point to the opposite direction, viz. parataxis: the majority of non-overt links show a clear prosodic break between the two arguments of the relation resulting in an increased autonomy of the two separated parts. In punctuation, the break may be rendered by a full stop, a semicolon, a dash, a colon or a comma. These signs do not only mark different (decreasing) degrees of prosodic separation but also different intonation contours: a colon for example is preceded by a clause with rising intonation that indicates an immediately following continuation, whereas all remaining signs except the comma follow an intonationally closed structure with falling contour. The prosodic behaviour of non-overt links is still poorly described, but even these very preliminary observations make clear that it affects the interchangeability of non-overt and overt linking: first, only paratactic connectives may realise inter-sentential links; second, among Russian causal connectives only *ibo* (for) meets this condition, third: this is the least frequent of all major causal conjunctions. In other words, the overwhelming majority of all non-overt links to be examined in this study have to be transformed syntactically before being compared with overt links, so that sequences of sentences are changed into complex sentences combining two clauses. Only non-overt links with a comma do not need to undergo such restructuring. All this reflects the fact that non-overt causality is essentially a matter of discourse grammar, whereas conjunctive linking belongs to sentence grammar. Moreover, we may now conclude that non-overt linking should be treated as a separate phenomenon that exists outside the traditional dichotomy of parataxis and hypotaxis.

3. Non-overt causal linking on the speech act level.

As with other interclausal relations, causal links may function both on the propositional and the speech act level; in the latter case they may be said to serve argumentative purposes (cf. Moeschler 2014). Since this distinction is known since several decades⁸, I will not dwell upon it here anymore, nor will I discuss in what way the propositional type is reducible to the speech act type by the reconstruction of missing speech act verbs. The only purpose of the following lines is to demonstrate that in this respect, non-overt linking behaves in the same way as overt (syndetic) linking.

⁷ Among the latter, it may be noted that a clause introduced by *potomu čto* must not be placed sentence-initially except in answers to *počemu*-questions. For details and a more fine-grained approach to the distinction of paratactical and hypotactical connectives, see Weiss 1989b.

⁸ For Russian, see the detailed discussion in Weiss 1977. Terminology may of course vary: in the Russian Academy Grammar (AG 1982) for instance, where there is no mention of speech acts whatsoever, the speech act or argumentative interpretation is called « motivation of judgment ».

In our next example, the causal clause motivates the speaker's assumption, which may optionally be marked by the epistemic adverb *naverno*. This works both with syndetic and asyndetic linking:

6a) Assistant [naverno] ujdět ot nas, potomu što ne poladil s načal'stvom.

The assistant will [certainly] leave us because he couldn't get on with the boss.

6a') Assistant [naverno] ujdět ot nas: ø on ne poladil s načal'stvom.

The assistant will [certainly] leave us: ø he couldn't get on with the boss.

As shown by punctuation, the asyndetic version is prosodically marked by the rising intonation of the first clause and a break⁹. The different impact of the propositional and the speech act level may best be illustrated by the divergent meanings of polysemous unities as in the following example.

7a) On podozritelen, potomu što /: ø ego často obmanyvali.

He is suspicious (distrustful) because /: ø he has often been cheated.

7b) On podozritelen, potomu što /: ø on nosit portfel' kak gebist.

He is suspicious (suspect) because /: ø he carries his briefcase like a KGB man.

Whereas the causal clause in (7a) provides the «objective» reason of the subject's distrustful character and thus functions on the propositional level, in (7b) the speaker justifies his/her evaluation of the subject by an argument based on his suspect behaviour. As can be seen, both readings may also be realised asyndetically. Note by the way that this polysemy works well in Russian and English, but not in French (cf. *suspect* vs. *soupçonneux*) or German (*verdächtig* vs. *argwöhnisch*).

The distinction of **deductive** and **reductive** reasoning known from traditional logic is likewise open to both overt and non-overt marking of the causal element. The deductive type was represented in example 6a. A possible reductive counterpart would be:

6b) Assistant [naverno] ne poladil s načal'stvom: on ujdět ot nas.

The assistant [certainly] couldn't get on with the boss: he will leave us.

The following double-layered representation which captures both the objective reason and the conclusion will make this distinction more transparent. In 6a the deductive conclusion takes the following shape (the conclusion is underscored):

⁹ The absence of a prosodic break in 6a) produces an ambiguous reading: the scope of the epistemic adverb *naverno* either comprizes the main predication *ujdět ot nas* or the causal clause *potomu što ne poladil s načal'stvom*. The intonational contours of these variants differ however: the first is marked by a peak on *ujdět*, the second on *s načal'stvom*.

<u>The assistant will leave us</u>	←	because he couldn't get on ...
effect		cause
conclusion	←	premise

In (6b), however, we find a reverted order of the two arrows involved:

<u>The assistant couldn't get on...</u>	→	<u>because</u> he will leave us
cause		effect
conclusion	←	premise

This is the very essence of reductive conclusions: they point back from an observable effect to its possible reason. What is relevant to our purpose is that both deductive and reductive conclusions likewise allow for non-overt marking, cf.

6b') Assistant [naverno] ne poladil s načal'stvom, potomu što ujdět ot nas.

The assistant [certainly] couldn't get on with the boss, because/ since he will leave us.

Thus, so far we have not detected any semantic obstacle that would prevent the non-overt realisation of a causal link.

The next problem to be tackled concerns **speech act typology**: what kinds of speech acts allow for subsequent implicit or explicit motivations? As for assertions, which constitute the classical source of explanations (all examples discussed so far belong to this type), the dialogic logic developed by Lorenzen & Lorenz 1978 postulates that every assertion may be questioned by an opponent, which implies that the speaker should be ready to defend it. In real communication, however, this is often a matter of degree, as may be shown by the following authentic example from Širâev (1986: 124):

8) Vetčina v magazine est' / ø â zaxodil¹⁰.

They have ham in the shop, I've been there.

Since this example stems from the Soviet period, where permanent shortages of basic goods were very widespread, it made sense to emphasise the truth of the statement by mentioning the speaker's personal evidence. In a capitalist society, such a motivation would look rather odd.

To put it in more general terms: statements related to **correspondence truths** often do not require a justification, since evidence is easily available by comparing the statement with the physically observable reality or our general knowledge about it. Statements on **truths by consensus**, on the other hand, are based on social agreement and thus always vulnerable. This may best be illustrated in political discourse, cf. the following evaluation of

¹⁰ In anthologies of spoken Russian the slash « / » always marks a pause.

Ukraine's association treaty with the EU, made by a pro-Russian deputy in the Ukrainian parliament on December 4, 2013 (for the subsequent motivation see section 6, example 9'):

9) Soglašenje ob asociaciji faktičeski pohože na soglašenje o polnoj, bezogovoročnoj èkonomičeskoj kapitulácii.

The association agreement with the EU resembles an agreement about an unconditional economic surrender.

Besides assertions, questions may also call for motivations. These can be belated, i.e. added after one or even more turns:

10) G. Nu / on iz teatra ne uhodit?

Well, does he not leave the theatre?

V. Net //

No

G. Potomu čto kak-to govorili čto vot uhodit v teatr odnogo aktera.

Because they said that he is joining the Theatre of one actor. (RRR 1978: 206).

In such cases, one can always reconstruct the missing speech act verb by inserting *Â sprašivaû* 'I am asking' before the causal connector.

Again, non-overt causal linking is available, cf.

11) Kuda ty sobiraeš'sâ idti? Ø U tebâ (že)¹¹ temperatura!

Where are you going? Ø You have got temperature!

12) A v korobkah tam est' konfety? Ø Ty xodil. // (Širâev, 1986, 125)

But are there candies in boxes? Ø You've been there.

This time, the missing link may be spelled out as *Â sprašivaû, potomu čto* (I am asking because).

Among the multifarious non-literal functions of questions, let us pick out the **rhetorical** use. As the derived meaning of rhetorical questions is that of a statement, one would expect them to combine freely with motivations. This is, however, not in line with the traditional view that canonical rhetorical questions do not require an answer. In reality, such answers occur quite often and may be given either by the speaker himself (especially in political discourse) or the addressee. The former case is realised in the following excerpt from deputy G. Gudkov's defense speech before his unprecedented exclusion from the State Duma on 14.9.2012:

¹¹ The particle *že* is optional in this context. Note that in Russian lexicography this use is often considered to have a proper causal meaning; thus, we would be dealing with an overt marker.

13) Evroparlament včera prinimaet rezolúciû, osuždaet nas – no čto nam Evropa?! Hotâ predstaviteli vlasti tam lečatsâ, učat svoix detej, otdyhaût tak dalee – plevat' my hoteli!

The European parliament yesterday accepted a resolution where it condemns us – but why should we care about Europe?! Although the representatives of our authorities undergo medical care there, their children receive their education there, they spend their vacations there and so on – we couldn't care less!

The rhetorical interpretation is superimposed by an ironic strategy, since the position referred to («Europe's opinion is irrelevant for us») obviously does not coincide with the speaker's view. Rhetorical questions may also combine with overt causal conjunctions, cf. *A na čto emu krasnye, raz u nego sobstvennyj dom?* (Why should he need the Commies, since he has his own house?)

Another derived use of questions is represented by **exclamations**. The following example is reminiscent of (10) in that the motivation follows in a later turn:

14) A. U vas Tan' moločnyj magazin stal *kakoj* košmarnyj//

What a nightmare your dairy has become!

B. Da //

Yes

A. I moloka net / i syrkov tam ne najdeš' // Užas! (RRR 1978:)

You won't find any milk there, nor sweet cottage cheese – just awful!

Again, this utterance fulfils the function of an evaluative statement about a consensus truth, hence the speaker has the right, if not the obligation to justify it. Note, however, that an overt marker would not fit in here. This may be generalised: most exclamations do not lend themselves to explicitly marked explanations, cf. «What a lovely skirt of yours! *Because it fits you perfectly!»

Requests do not always freely combine with motivations. In the case of commands and prohibitions, this is due to the unquestioned superiority of the speaker over the addressee, which makes a justification unnecessary. Other types of requests are less restrictive in this respect, as can be seen in **warnings** such as

15) Ne davajte detâm doroguû posudu – ø oni pereb'ût vsë!

Don't give expensive tableware to [the] children – ø they will break it all!

16) Ne vlezaj – ub'ët!

Do not enter – ø [it] will kill! (on power substations)

The meaning of the causal relation at hand is more complex than in the examples examined so far: the second clause indicates what will happen if the addressee does not follow the warning. The corresponding explicit Russian marker of this subtype of causality would be *a to*, its English counterpart *otherwise*.

The next warning, addressed to a small child, exhibits an intricate interplay of explicit and implicit markers:

17) Ne pej / ne pej! Ø Vot u tebâ ot ètogo život i bolit / ot myla! (RRR 1978: 250)
Don't drink, don't drink! Ø That's why your stomach hurts: because of the soap!

This warning is motivated twice, since the second clause contains an in-built overt explanation, viz. the prepositional phrase *ot ètogo*, which is eventually specified at the very end (*ot myla*). Note that this does not block the insertion of an overt conjunction, cf. *potomu čto ot ètogo...*; this would, however, be more acceptable after the removal of the focalising particle *vot*, cf. ^{??} *potomu čto vot ot ètogo...*

Indirect requests may also trigger explanations. Conventional models¹² in question form with negated modal verbs such as *Vy ne mogli by skazat'* (Could you please tell me) or without modals as in *Vy ne skažete...* (please tell me) seem to be less restricted than non-conventional versions. The following example from M. Gor'kij illustrates a question that tests whether one of the felicity conditions of the planned master speech act (the request) is met. It comes without modal verb and with overt motivation.

18) U vas net lišnego platočka? A to, ponimaete, komary lysinu kusaût.
Don't you have a spare handkerchief? Because the mosquitos are stinging my bald head, you know.

The omission of the conjunction would be acceptable. The behaviour of **non-conventional indirect requests** may be illustrated by the following pair of English sentences:

19a) Could you take the garbage downstairs, as it's / Ø It's your turn.
19b) The garbage bin is full again, *since/*as it's your turn / Ø It's your turn¹³.

As can be seen, the conventional version admits both overt and non-overt explanation, whereas the non-conventional indirect request combines only with the non-overt one. In Russian, the non-overt solution would even be preferable in the conventional version 19a due to the type of the request (the addressee's role is part of a script, therefore the link need not be marked explicitly), cf.

19a) Ty snesëš' musor? Ø Segodnâ tvoâ očered' /..., [?]*potomu čto segodnâ tvoâ očered*.

¹² For a closer look at the competing variants within this domain in Russian including their English equivalents, see Mills 1992.

¹³ A similar pair was already discussed in Davison 1975: 177: «Shut the window, please, as it's my turn to move in the game», but: «It's cold in here, *as it's my turn to move in the game».

On the other hand, if there is no such script at work, the overt conjunction would be available with the conventional formulation:

20a) Ty ne mog by zakryt' okno, raz u menâ ruki zanâty / Ø U menâ ruki zanâty.
Could you close the window, since my hands are full / Ø My hands are full.

20b) Zdes' sil'no duet, *raz / Ø U menâ ruki zanâty.
There is draft in here, *since my hands are full / Ø My hands are full.

All this boils down to the statement that we have for the first time come across a situation where non-overt linking is not optional, but obligatory. Indirect requests thus provide a challenging topic for more in-depth investigation.

The next example from spoken Russian is somehow more sophisticated in that the main speech act (a refusal) is omitted, but recoverable from its motivation:

21) R: Mam, vy včera vzâli gazetu?
Mum, did you take the newspaper yesterday?
A: Net, vot šas papa vstanet i sxodit za gazetoj.
No, daddy will get up right now and bring the newspaper.
R. Â shožu!
I'll go!
A: Tigrěnok ! Ø Ty že ne dostaneš' gazetu milyj. (RRR 1978: 247)
My little tiger! You won't reach the newspaper, my dear.

This fragment presents a nice piece of face working: a blunt refusal would have been a face threatening act for the little boy who offers his help, hence it is omitted, but motivated by the physical impossibility of achieving the act offered. Moreover, the hidden refusal is mitigated by the opening and closing hypocoristic address forms. It goes without saying that this strategy works exclusively without overt linking: a marker such as *because* would here be completely out of place.

Said strategy may, however, produce undesirable ambiguity. The next example, quoted from the electronic corpus «Odin rečevoj den'», allows for two opposite interpretations: either it motivates a refusal or else the acceptance to stay.

22) ZV. Posidite, V. A.!
Please remain seated, V. A.!
Ø Tam do pâti časov apteka.
The pharmacy there is [open] till five o'clock.

The two alternative readings of this reply are *The pharmacy will close soon, so I'd rather be off* or else *There is plenty of time left till the pharmacy closes, so I'm not in a hurry*¹⁴. Without further contextual clues the whole string remains pragmatically ambiguous.

To sum up: the little overview outlined in this section has shown that not only assertions of consensus truths, but also various subtypes of questions and requests may be followed by both overt and non-overt causal links. Moreover, the speech act to be motivated may itself be missing, in which case the motivation carries the whole functional load of the utterance. This occurs, however, mainly with refusals and calls for an explanation in terms of politeness theory. It seems tempting to ask whether there are other types of speech acts which will never be motivated by the speaker. The most reliable candidates for this category are **declaratives**. Indeed, in such classical cases as «I name you...», «I now pronounce you husband and wife» or «Herewith I affirm that...» there is no use in giving or expecting an explanation or justification whatsoever. As for **behabitives** (expressives, according to Searle's typology), such as apologies or acknowledgements, it may be assumed that they seldom are followed by an explanation, since the triggering event usually precedes the utterance. In the case of ritual exchanges, such as greetings or leave-takings, the need for a justification is even less evident. On the whole, one gets the strong impression that the possibility of motivation of a given speech act is a scalar value that depends on a multitude of different pragmatic and textual factors that are still poorly understood. This holds all the more for the distinction of overt vs. non-overt causal links. Still, one hypothesis formulated in this section (cf. examples 19-20) might prove valid: the more indirect the request at hand, the less likely will be its motivation by means of an overt causal marker.

4. Where overt and non-overt causality diverge.

Unlike overt realisation of a causal link, its non-overt counterpart offers a huge advantage for text production, which may, however, turn out to be a disadvantage for text processing. The following excerpt from Il'f and Petrov's adventure novel «The twelve chairs»¹⁵ will illustrate the problem:

23) [Ippolit Matveyevich disliked his mother-in-law.] Caus_o [Claudia Ivanovna was stupid, and her advanced age gave little hope of any improvement. She was stingy in the extreme, and it was only Ippolit Matveyevich's poverty which prevented her giving rein to this passion. Her voice was so strong and fruity that it might well have been envied by Richard the Lionheart, at whose shout, as is well known, horses used to kneel. Furthermore, and this was the worst thing of all about her, she had dreams. She was always having dreams. She dreamed of girls in sashes, horses trimmed with the yellow braid worn by dragoons, caretakers playing harps, angels in watchmen's fur coats who went for walks at night carrying clappers, and knitting-needles which

¹⁴ This paraphrases the explanation given in Ermolova 2014: 25, where example 22 is taken from.

¹⁵ The Russian original, which has been omitted here for reasons of space, is examined in detail in Weiss 1989a as a specimen of very intricate cohesive relations.

hopped around the room by themselves making a distressing tinkle.] An empty-headed woman was Claudia Ivanovna. In addition to everything else, her upper lip was covered by a moustache, each side of which resembled a shaving brush.
http://lib.ru/ILFPETROV/ilf_petrov_12_chairs_engl.txt

The overall structure of this chunk of text may be characterised as follows. The opening negative statement «I.M. disliked his mother-in-law» calls for an explanation, which is provided by a sequence of six sentences, most of which encompass two up to four clauses with rich internal structure. All members of this chain describe the main character's negative properties by increasingly hyperbolic attributes and thus contribute to justify Ippolit Matveyevich's negative stance towards his mother-in-law. The square brackets in the quotation mark the first and the second conjunct of a non-overt causal link *Caus₀*. The whole episode is eventually summarised by a statement with inverted word order «An empty-headed woman was Claudia Ivanovna», followed by another unexpected hyperbolic negative trait («In addition to everything else»).

Could this whole string be transformed into a sequence of overtly marked causal clauses? A first tests yields an unacceptable result:

23') [Ippolit Matveyevich disliked his mother-in-law.] because [Claudia Ivanovna was stupid, and her advanced age gave little hope of any improvement, *because / *since / *for the simple reason that she was stingy in the extreme... *because / *since / *for the simple reason that her voice was so strong and fruity that...

No need to continue: it has already become evident that this operation produces not only a stylistically unsatisfactory avalanche of clauses with iterations of the same conjunction, but a fundamental semantical change, since every subsequent causal conjunction is now linked with the immediately preceding clause. Consequently, the main character's stinginess would explain her stupidity, her strong voice her stinginess, and so on. What we need instead is a linguistic realisation of the following logical conjunction of propositions:

$\text{Prop}_0 \text{ Caus } (\text{Prop}_1 \wedge \text{Prop}_2 \wedge \dots \wedge \text{Prop}_n)$

The appropriate overt equivalent would be the conjunction *and*. However, its insertion leads again to a solution which is inadequate not only for stylistic reasons:

23") ...because Claudia Ivanovna was stupid, and her advanced age gave little hope of any improvement, and she was stingy in the extreme, and it was only Ippolit Matveyevich's poverty which prevented her giving rein to this passion, and her voice was so strong...

In the original wording (23), *and* is already present, but regularly links a negative quality with its amplification, cf. «...was stupid, *and* her advanced age gave little hope of any

improvement». This subtle hierarchy is destroyed in 23 where *and* appears everywhere, which assigns equal weight to every single clause. The only satisfactory way out of this semantic impasse would consist in restructuring the whole passage by means of a cataphoric announcement, such as «Ippolit Matveyevich disliked his mother-in-law *for the following reasons*». Such a wording would however fit badly into the genre of literary fiction. All this boils down to the conclusion that the non-overt linking chosen in the original text is the only satisfactory solution.

This analysis raises, however, at least two questions. First, how can we determine where an asyndetic chain of explanations ends? In example 23 this end was unequivocally marked by a sentence that summarised the whole catalogue of negative properties, but other texts do not contain such clear boundaries. Thus, the non-overt strategy may create a source of vagueness that inhibits the processing of the ongoing discourse. Second, the first conjunct (or else: the first argument of the causal relation) may also encompass a whole sequence of autonomous sentences¹⁶. To detect such cases and to test experimentally how they are processed would be a new challenge, all the more so as the beginning of such a chain of explanations is never marked. In sum, non-overt causal linking offers the chance of combining different parallel causes or arguments, but also the risk of blurring the upper or lower boundary of such sequences.

On the other hand, there are contexts that prevent non-overt causal linking. In particular, the obstacle may be a given information structure that focalises the causal clause, which makes the overt conjunction mandatory, cf.

24) Hoču kupit' èto plat'e, imenno potomu što ono nraivsâ Nine.
I want to buy this dress precisely because Nina likes it.

25) Naverno Alla zla potomu, što proigralas'.
Alla is certainly upset because she has lost.

At least in one of the two readings of 25, the causal clause is in the scope of the epistemic marker *naverno* (certainly), whereas the main clause is not asserted, but presupposed¹⁷.

Moreover, the inventory of Russian causal connectives (as well as their counterpart in English, French or German) encompasses various elements whose meaning is so specific that it cannot be «nullified». This holds for the hypotactic conjunction *raz*, which always introduces a clause rendering presupposed information (cf. Iordanskaja 1988).

26) Raz opozdal, budeš' dežurit'. = Budeš' dežurit', raz opozdal.
Since you were late, you will be on duty. = You will be on duty, since you were late.

¹⁶ In Weiss 1989 b: 295 and 297-8, three such examples are examined where a sequence of two up to six clauses referring to parallel reasons or arguments precedes the consecutive conjunction *tak što* (so that), which introduces the final conclusion. In the longest example, it remains unclear where the chain of arguments begins.

¹⁷ Cf. note 4 for a similar ambiguity. When the causal clause constitutes the focus, punctuation changes, cf. the comma dividing the two components of *potomu što* in 25.

Replacing it by an asyndetic link with a prosodic break would inevitably destroy this structure. Another causal conjunction that has no non-overt equivalent is *tem bolee čto* (all the more so as), which indicates an additional reason, cf.

26') Budeš' dežurit', tem bolee čto opozdal.

You will be on duty, all the more so as you were late.

≠ (26'') Budeš' dežurit': ty opozdal.

You will be on duty: you were late.

Whereas in 26'' the addressee's late arrival is the only reason for his being on duty, in 26' the latter may well be prearranged for other reasons to which now the delay is added. And finally, *otтого čto* marks an involuntary causation and is therefore not replaceable by other causal conjunctions without a loss of meaning.

The following joke presents a case of doubly non-overt linking, where an asyndetic conditional period is embedded in the causal string¹⁸.

27) Prodačtsâ na rynke govorâšij popugaj. U nego na odnoj noge sinââ lenta, a na drugoj - krasnaâ. Staruška podhodit i interesuetsâ:

- A začem u nego dve lentočki?

- Ø_{caus} (Ø_{cond}) Děrneš' za sinû – govorit po-anglijski, děrneš' za krasnuû – govorit po-francuzski.

- A čto, esli za obe děrnut' - ne unimaetsâ staruška, - čto budet?

- Čto budet, čto budet! Na žopu upadu, - ne vyderživaet popugaj.

On the market, a speaking parrot is for sale. He has a blue ribbon on one leg and a red one on the other. An old woman approaches and asks: «Why does it have two ribbons?» Ø_{caus} (Ø_{cond}) You pluck at the blue one, and it speaks English, you pluck at the red one, and it speaks French ». «And what happens if I pluck at both legs?» - the old woman does not quiet down. The parrot loses its temper: «What happens, what happens! I'll fall on my ass!»

Note that all three possible overt variants (*potomu čto esli* / *potomu čto* Ø_{cond} / Ø_{caus} *Esli*) would also be acceptable here.

These observations may be recapitulated as follows: non-overt linking is not always optional. If the causal component comprizes a whole chain of parallel events, states or arguments expressed by autonomous sentences, it cannot be introduced by a conjunction. This may, however, produce the undesirable effect that the end or (as in the case of the order 'cause – consequence') the beginning of this chain might be unclear. On the other hand, non-

¹⁸ Recall that the symbol Ø does not signal a syntactically empty slot, be this elliptical or a zero sign. On the contrary, it can be argued that asyndetic conditional sentences are a separate construction with formal characteristics on their own.

overt linking is ruled out if the causal clause is focalised or if the causal relation needed calls for a semantically specialised conjunction.

5. The impact of word order on the interpretation.

So far we have been analysing situations where the lexically unmarked (non-overt) causal clause followed the «main» clause, or else: the explanans followed the explanandum. Is this a robust constraint on word order? It would distinguish non-overt linking from hypotactic overt linking, where the preposition of the causal clause is in principle available (cf. example 26 above): as is well known, this is even one of the most salient features that distinguishes hypotaxis from parataxis¹⁹. Moreover, prepositional order would be iconic since causes precede or partially overlap effects, but do not follow them. However, as corpus-based research has shown, the anti-iconic order seems to prevail in natural languages: unlike temporal and conditional clauses, which in 45% take the initial position, causal clauses do so only in 25% (see Moeschler 2014 for references). This does however not imply that non-overt linking shows the same preferences. Before turning to the detailed discussion, let us have a brief look at what Russian grammatical tradition has to say on clause order in asyndetic linking. Garde (2006 [1988]: 382) follows Karcevskij's strict division between prepositive order, which characterises temporal, conditional and concessive clauses, and postpositive order, which comprizes causal and final clauses. This analysis has three serious shortcomings: first, it is based on a very limited number of examples, second, not all examples were tested for reversibility, and third, there is no mention of the consecutive interpretation. As can easily be shown, this leads to an oversimplified generalisation. Širâev 1988 is aware of the consecutive reading and does not postulate a similar distinction of exclusively pre- vs. postpositive clauses; on the contrary, he cites many counterexamples with postpositive temporal interpretation. Moreover, he gives paraphrases with preposed causal clauses, such as (on p. 91):

28) Uže pozdno / ne pridët on naverno. → Tak kak uže pozdno, ne pridët on naverno.
It's late / he surely won't come. → Since it is late, he surely won't come.

Besides this, he also proposes the consecutive paraphrase ...*i poëtomu ne pridët on naverno*. The Academic Grammar (AG 1982) rejects the idea of general positional restrictions of asyndetic structure (p. 635), but all examples of causal clauses quoted on p. 649 f. follow the postpositional pattern.

Let us now tackle this question in a more systematic way. The next authentic example from spoken Russian refers to an «objective» cause-effect relation:

29) Dožd' byl / vymokli do nitki. (Širâev 1986: 79)

¹⁹ This distinction is far from being clear-cut, and different criteria lead to different delimitations of the categories. For details, see Weiss 1989 b, where the impact of 11 syntactic, semantic and pragmatic criteria on the behaviour of 10 selected Russian connectives is investigated.

It was raining, we got soaked to the skin.

This example allows for two alternative overt paraphrases:

29a) *Poskol'ku / tak kak byl dožd', my vymokli do nitki*²⁰.

Because it was raining, we got soaked to the skin.

29b) *Byl dožd', tak čto my vymokli do nitki.*

It was raining, so we got soaked to the skin.

In 29b we are dealing with the **converse relation (Caus⁻¹)** of causality, or in traditional syntactic terms: a **consecutive** clause. The interchangeability does not come as a surprise: converse relations refer to the same state of affairs as the original relations. This leads to the conclusion (already formulated in Weiss 1993: 73 f) that we can locate the zero sign alternatively either in initial or intermediate position: in the first case it replaces the causal connective, in the second the consecutive one. Experimental research by testing native speakers' reactions may well prove that the second position is likely to be preferred²¹, but this is no principal objection against the initial position.

If for the same sequence of sentences/clauses two alternative positions of the zero connective are available, this raises serious doubts about the zero analysis in general. After all, no one would claim that examples 28 and 29 are ambiguous because they allow either a causal or consecutive reading. What is really decisive for our understanding is the sequence «cause – effect», which remains unchanged.

In the next example, a premise precedes a reductive²² conclusion; thus, we are now dealing with the argumentative or speech-act interpretation, cf. section 2:

30) *Â vižu ležašego na spine človeka. Ostanavlivaûs' vozle nego. V nos udarâet zapax vina. Ø On, kažetsâ, p'ân.* (magazines.russ.ru/neva/2008/10/ta3-pr.html).

I see a man lying on his back. I stop near him. The smell of wine hits my nose. Ø He *seems* to be drunken.

The conclusion is marked by the epistemic adverb *kažetsâ*, here taken in its inferential meaning. An overt rephrasing of 30 would again produce two alternatives. Either we would have the connective in initial position (*Poskol'ku v nos udarâet zapax vina / As the smell of wine hits my nose*) together with a transformation of the last two sentences into one single sentence, or else the overt equivalents would be *poètomu / tak čto* (so, therefore), but in intermediary position (no matter how much these connectives would be stylistically acceptable). Again, this corresponds to two alternative positions of the zero sign, cf.

²⁰ The initial position is not available for *potomu čto*. The word order has been changed because the original order *Dožd' byl* assigns too much prosodic autonomy to this string.

²¹ As is shown in Moeschler et al. 2006, the order consequence – cause constitutes a kind of cognitive short circuit device that allows for a faster decoding of weak associative links between events.

²² For this term, recall what has been said about example 6b.

30') Ø_{caus} V nos udarâet zapax vina, on, kažetsâ, p'ân.

30'') V nos udarâet zapax vina, Ø_{cons} on, kažetsâ, p'ân.

But such a structural ambiguity seems counter-intuitive: what matters is the formula 'premise → conclusion', which is shared by both variants. If we wanted to alter this, we would have to revert the order of clauses: *He seems to be drunken: Ø the smell of wine hits my nose*. As a result, we would obtain the formula «Conclusion ← premise», and this time the overt connective would be placed in the middle (*He seems to be drunken, because the smell of wine hits my nose*). Most importantly, however, the first clause (the conclusion) cannot not be introduced by an overt connective. This is just another way of saying that consecutive conjunctions and adverbs are clearly paratactical in that they are always placed between the two clauses involved and do not admit their inversion.

As for the analysis of asyndetic cases like 28-30, the conclusion imposes itself that there is no sense in postulating any syntactically empty slots (be they elliptical or zeroes), but to treat such sequences as separate non-differentiated causal-consecutive constructions²³. This is exactly the term used in Širâev (1986: 91, «nedifferencirovannyj pričinno-sledstvennyj kompleks»)²⁴. A different terminology is proposed by Haag (2004: 129), who uses the label 'causal-consecutive relations with neutralised priority' covering non-overt links, contrary to lexically marked causal or consecutive clauses that express a priority status.

To make things more complicated, some contexts allow for both causal and consecutive readings, although the non-overt link remains located at the same place:

31) Ona ne unimalas', i â soveršenno poterâlsâ. Ø_{cons / caus} Ne znal, čto delat'.

She didn't quiet down, and I was lost. Ø_{cons / caus} I didn't know what to do.

32) Davaj popravljâjsâ skoree, Ø_{cons / caus} na rybalku poedem.

Recover as soon as possible, Ø_{cons / caus} we are going fishing.

In 31, this ambiguity has to do with the predicate *poterâlsâ* (was lost), which yields either an explanation in terms of *in what sense?* or an answer to the question *to what effect?* In 32, the ambiguity is due to two possible scripts: according to the causal one, the group has already decided to go fishing anyway, and the addressee should hurry up if she wants to join the group, whereas in the second reading the group wants him to join them so that they can go fishing. The two competing interpretations have to be kept apart in the semantic analysis, but this is not a question of syntactical emptiness.

Colloquial Russian also allows for the **interposition** of one clause within the other:

²³ A similar situation obtains with anteriority and posteriority markers, which are also connected by a converse relation.

²⁴ In the Russian grammatical tradition, the term «nedifferencirovannoe otnošenje» is larger, as it also refers to cases that oscillate between the temporal and conditional or the adversative and concessive reading.

33) Nikuda â ploho sebâ čuvstvuû ne pojdu// (Širâev, 1986, 127)
 nowhere I bad feel not will go
 I am not going anywhere, I feel bad.

As can be seen, the cause is here embedded in the consequence. The reverse order where the effect is embedded in the cause is also attested, cf.

34) Isportilis' est' nel'zâ apel'siny u nas. (Širâev 1986, 128)
 went bad eat impossible oranges at us
 Our oranges have gone bad, they are not edible.

Such cases of asyndetic interposition are reminiscent of interposition with overt hypotactical linking, cf. in 26: «Ty budeš', raz opozdal, dežurit'». The restrictions of both types are practically unexplored, but there is evidence that not all overt interpositions can be transformed into non-overt ones, cf. «[?]Ty budeš' opozdal dežurit'».

To sum up, word order does not give reliable clues for the detection and interpretation of non-overt causal links, since both arguments and conclusions (or causes and effects) may in principle occur both in pre- and in postposition. Moreover, such strings may be interpreted as expressing either a causal or consecutive relation. If we maintain the idea of structurally empty slots, this produces alternative locations of the zero sign, although the examples involved are never felt to be ambiguous. Therefore the only viable solution is to give up the idea of zeroes and postulate abstract non-overt causal-consecutive constructions. It goes without saying that this refusal of zeroes must not be generalised by including other types of asyndetic links: the existence of empty slots still remains a valid option to be considered in other semantic domains.

6. Discourse expectations as triggers for causal linking.

Section 2 discussed the question which types or subtypes of speech acts *can* be motivated by causal clauses or sentences. Let us now sharpen the objective by asking which speech acts *should* be motivated. In other words: are there contexts that trigger such expectations more or less automatically? In this way, a track is retaken that was already led in Weiss 1982. In the meantime, the phenomenon that was then called «textual expectations» has become somewhat more fashionable under the label **discourse expectations**. The latter are said to open new theoretical, experimental and computational perspectives, as is stated in the announcement of the conference DETEC 2015: «Studies on discourse processing indicate that natural language interpretation is expectation-driven. Even though it is uncontroversial that both linguistic (e.g. lexical items, morpho-syntactic constructions, prosody) and extralinguistic factors (e.g. world knowledge) are used to anticipate how discourse is likely to continue, the nature of their interplay is a topic of ongoing research». (<http://detec2015.wordpress.com/>).

This is where **corpus linguistics** comes in: if we succeed in establishing a list of single or multiword-expressions producing such expectations, we will be able to check the surrounding (preceding and subsequent) contexts of each item in, let us say, the Russian National Corpus (RNC), and thus detect and quantify hidden explanations, motivations and justifications. The following, very preliminary list of possible triggers makes it clear that complete covering of all instances would in many cases be a matter of impossibility: (i) negative statements, (ii) epistemic markers (adverbs, particles, verbs, etc.), (iii) evidentials: inferentials or memory, but not hearsay information, (iv) evaluations, (v) accusations. This means that at least in the case of negation we will have to base the investigation on a limited sample. On the other hand, lexical units such as *očevidno* (obviously) (RNC: 29,362 hits), *po-vidimomu* (by all evidence) (RNC: 16,384) or *zrâ* (in vain) (RNC: 10,643) yield a tolerable amount of instances to be checked. The ultimate goal could be to measure the relative weight of the expectation engendered by every single item from the list.

Said approach abounds of course in numerous difficulties. To begin with, evidential and epistemic meanings intersect in Russian, as well as in most European languages; this has however no impact on statistics as long as we count only the signifiers. Moreover, many Russian evidentials are ambiguous between inferential and hearsay meaning, which calls for a careful check of the corresponding contexts: as will be shown, hearsay information does not need to be explained. Negative statements may be part of the outfit of certain speech act, such as warnings or conventional indirect requests, cf. 15-18 and 20a; in such cases it is the speech act as a whole that triggers the motivation. One has also to account for in-built lexical negations, such as *dislike* instead of *not like*, cf. example 23. Rhetorical questions like 13 may likewise contain a hidden negation. The category ‘evaluation’ has to be narrowed down, if we don’t want to end up with an open list. And finally, one context may provide more than one trigger by combining e.g. negation with an epistemic modal. At any rate, what is outlined here constitutes an entire research program and cannot be discussed but in a very sketchy and informal way.

The impact of **negative statements** has already been illustrated in example 23, where the negative stance of Ippolit Matveyevich towards his mother-in-law called for an explanation. Other negative assertions accompanied by explanations were represented in 6b, 28, 33 and 34. A negative existential statement is motivated in the following example:

35) Âsno i to, čto legitimnoj ispolnitel’noj vlasti na Ukraine do sih por net, razgovarivat’ ne s kem. Ø Mnogie gosorgany uzurpirovany samozvamcami, pri ètom oni ničego v strane ne kontrolirujut, a sami – hoču èto podčerknut’ – často sami nahodjatsja pod kontrolom radikalov. (V. Putin, 18.03.2014).

And it is obvious that so far there is no legitimate executive power in Ukraine, there is nobody to talk with. Ø Many governmental institutions are usurped by impostors, however they don’t control anything in the country, and they themselves – I want to stress this – are often controlled by radicals.

An insufficient reason may likewise produce the expectation of further arguments. The following fragment was uttered by a deputy of the Russian State дума when discussing a resolution to be addressed to Poland on the Katyn' massacre committed by the Soviet secret service in February 1940:

36) Očevidno, nel'zâ tol'ko politikoj ob"âsnit', počemu imenno Katyn' ostaëtsâ noûšej ranoj v duše polâkov, sumevših prostit' drugih. Polagaû, oskorbitel'no dlâ sosednego naroda prežde vsego lož' – lož', kotoruû pestovali desâtiletiâmi, na kotoroj vyrosli pokoleniâ u nas v strane.

Obviously, the question why it is precisely Katyn' that remains to be an aching wound in the soul of the Poles, who forgave others, cannot be explained by politics alone. I guess it is the lie that is the biggest offence to our neighbouring nation — a lie that was maintained for decades in our country.

Note that overt causal linking would fail here: there is no slot where it would fit in. **Epistemic modals** also call for explanations, no matter whether they express the speaker's certainty or uncertainty: if the truth of the utterance in question were beyond any doubt, the speaker would not emphasise it by an adverb like *certainly*. The impact of *naverno* (certainly) has already been demonstrated in examples 6 and 25. As may be recalled, the latter example (*Alla is upset because she has lost*) exhibits a scope ambiguity. Other epistemic adverbs producing similar expectations would be *veroâtno* (probably), *vozmožno* (possibly), *vrâd li* (hardly), etc.

Inferential expressions mark conclusions, cf. examples 6a-b, hence the necessity of expliciting the premises on which these conclusions are based. As was pointed out above, epistemic and inferential meanings often combine: this happens when the arguments at hand are not the only possible ones. *Kažetsâ* (it seems) was attested in 30 with epistemic inferential meaning. It should, however, be borne in mind that the same adverb may also mark reported speech (hearsay information), which without additional epistemic marking does not require a motivation. In the next example from Turgenyev's «Fathers and children» the inferential *vidimo* cooccurs with negation as a second trigger:

37) Èta poslednââ fraza, vidimo, ne ponravilas' Bazarovu: Ø ot neë veâlo filosofiej, to est' romantizmom, ibo Bazarov i filosofiû nazval romantizmom.

Obviously, Bazarov did not like this latter sentence: it had a scent of philosophy, or else romanticism, since B. also called philosophy romanticism.

The causal conjunction *ibo* introduces an explanation of the somewhat bizarre equation 'philosophy = romanticism'. A similar situation obtains in 38, where negation meets remembered information:

38) Ne pomnû teper' uže, kak â togda pisal, potomu što ne hranil svoih rukopisej.

I don't remember any more how I used to write at that time, since I didn't keep my manuscripts' (Û. Kazakov, Avtobiografiâ).

In general, the degree of reliability of information retrieved from memory is often characterised in epistemic terms and subsequently justified. On the contrary, hearsay information never needs a motivation without an additional epistemic assessment. The next example does not provide counterevidence despite the causal clause:

39) V ètih restoranah, govorât, vseгда zanâto, poskol'ku tam každyj den' otmečaetsâ čej-to den' roždeniâ. (E. Krongauz, Zdes' užasno prekrasno. Stolica 1997.10.28)
They say these restaurants are always booked out since there are birthday parties going on every day.

The causal proposition states the reason of the main proposition (*always booked out*), it does not comment on the speaker's source of information (*they say*).

On the whole, the number of inferential expressions relevant to our purpose amounts to several dozens, and it seems difficult to establish the whole inventory.

As mentioned above, the category '**evaluations**' calls for a rigorous specification which cannot be elaborated here. Some examples will suffice to illustrate it. A first evaluation was conveyed by the exclamation in 14 (*what a nightmare*). The next example could also be subsumed under the category 'negative statements', as the English translation shows:

40) Zrâ ona bespokoitsâ: Ø francuzskij-to ona horošo znaet.
There is no reason for her to get nervous: her command of French is good.

Sometimes a particular assumption is explained by the general inclination of the subject to behave in this way:

41) A to on rasserditsâ yser'ëz. Ø On ved' očen', očen' umeet serdit'sâ.
Otherwise he will get seriously mad. He is capable of getting very, very furious.

The next example has already been presented above as statement of a consensus truth. Now, it will be quoted in full as a specimen of a controversial assessment in need of a detailed motivation:

9') Soglašenje ob asociaciji faktičeski pohože na soglašenje o polnoj, bezogovoročnoj èkonomičeskoj kapitulácii – Ø my sdaem svoi rynki, my za svoi dengi perehodim na čužie standarty, my prinimaem k sebe čužoe zakonodatel'stvo, pričëm ne tol'ko to, kotoroe u nas sušestvuet na dannyj moment, my prinimaem zakonodatel'stvo, kotoroe i v dal'nejšem Evropa budet prinimat'. I my ne vliâem na prinâtie teh zakonov, po kotorym my v budušem dolžny rabotat'. (Èto faktičeski novaâ koloniâ, O.A. Carëv, 4.12.2013).

The association agreement resembles an agreement on an unconditional economic surrender – we'll give up our markets, we switch to foreign standards for our own

money, we adopt a foreign legislation, not only the currently existing one, but the legislation that Europe will adopt in the future. And we have no influence on the adoption of these laws, according to which we will have to work in the future. This is practically a *new colony*.

By the length of the explanatory sequence, this example is reminiscent of Ippolit Matveyevich's dislike of his mother-in-law in example 23. It encompasses no less than five arguments as support of the main thesis that the Ukrainian rapprochement towards Europe means a complete surrender. As in 23, the author marks the end of this chain by a final summarising evaluation (*a new colony*).

There is no doubt that evaluations constitute a very broad and lexically heterogeneous category, which defies any attempt to capture them in a close list.

Accusations (the last category on our preliminary list above) could be considered a subtype of evaluations, but are singled out here because of the mandatory character of the justification. This holds not only for accusations in legal discourse, but also in political debates. For example, the heavy insinuation in the following case inevitably calls for a justification:

42) Prâmaâ i neposredstvennaâ vina ležit na Evrope i Amerike. Ø Pri ih informacionnom, finansovom, politiĉeskom i organizacionnom uĉastii stalo vozmožnoj graždanskaâ vojna na Ukraine. Èto ne bunt, èto vojna.

The direct culprits are Europe and the US. The civil war in Ukraine became possible thanks to their informational, financial, political and organisational participation. This is not an insurrection, but *war*. (V. Kolesniĉenko, 28.2.2014).

This assignment of guilt for the Maidan upheaval by a pro-Russian politician, then still deputy of the Ukrainian parliament, is even more controversial as it proposes a recategorisation of the event in terms of war.

To sum up, there is a broad range of expressions that predict a subsequent explanation more or less strongly²⁵. A corpus-based in-depth scrutiny of their possible contexts will no doubt help enhance the automatic processing of natural texts, for instance in argument mining or information retrieval. To determine the relative weight of the prediction is however no easy task, given such factors as the polysemy of the expressions involved, the cooccurrence of two or more different triggers in the same sentence or the various manifestations of indirect negation.

7. Conclusions.

²⁵ The opposite situation should also be borne in mind: although the present overview did not contain contexts where the arguments preceded the conclusion without lexical marking of the latter, this situation is well attested in real texts, for instance in detective stories.

The main results of this study may be summarised as follows. Causal links without lexical marking belong to separate causal-consecutive constructions and are not reducible nor synonymous to lexically marked causal clauses with the same content. Functionally, they intersect with overt causal links and are thus obligatory, possible (substitutable by overt links) or excluded in the given context. They do not contain syntactically empty slots, such as zeroes or ellipses. They usually encompass two or more syntactically autonomous sentences; in spontaneous dialogue these may belong to different turns and even be disrupted by other turns. They may either connect cause and effect or argument (premise) and conclusion. In some contexts, their interpretation may remain ambiguous by allowing for an alternative conditional or temporal reading. The ordering of the causal and consecutive components is in principle reversible. Non-overt causal links serve to motivate various types and subtypes of speech acts, such as statements (especially on truths by consensus), questions, direct and indirect requests, but are not likely to combine with others, especially declaratives and behabitives. They are frequently related to dissent in the broadest sense of the term, including refusals, accusations, negative evaluations etc. This may be one of the reasons why we so often find negation among the lexical triggers of explanations. Other elements with the same effect are epistemic and inferential markers; what has to be motivated in the former case is the speaker's assessment of the truth of the utterance, in the latter the evidence for the conclusion at hand.

One final remark concerns the general validity of this description. It seems to be a sound assumption that most of the characteristics outlined above hold not only for Russian, but may turn out to be typical (if not universally valid) for natural languages in general.

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